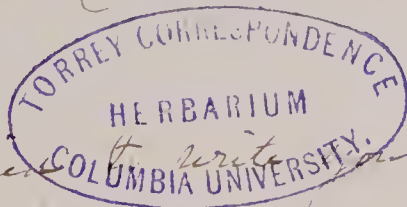


Recd. Feb. 8<sup>th</sup> 1851. (no date)

Ans. 10<sup>th</sup>.

My dear Sir



I promised to write you how  
we progressed in botanical affairs - but  
I have as yet nothing that will interest  
you. I came through from San Antonio  
with an advance party on a forced  
march & consequently was unable to devote  
much time to the few plants that the  
long drought allowed to exist - The  
begin of our route - the western road is a  
most barren one & except in the mountain  
passes there was but little variety in  
the vegetation. - I have collected all  
that the rapidity of the march would  
allow & shall be glad to find that there  
are any good things among them -

We have not seen any thing of Doct.  
Perry. I am sorry to find that there  
is some misunderstanding in regard to him.  
I never heard of him until my visit to you  
at Princeton. - you must therefore acquit  
me of all intention of displacing him -  
The position which I hold in the expedition  
is one which I have won neither influence  
nor management to obtain - a place which  
I supposed at the time was without other

applicant - I state this because I learn  
from Mr. Battlett that you have written  
Doct Parry in relation to the matter & that you have written to the Hon. Sec. Interior  
in the Secretary Mr. Ewing in relation to  
Doct Parry & hope you do not consider  
me as having depose your friend -

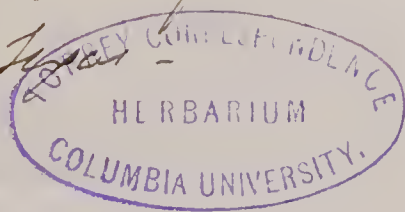
If I find as I doubtless shall - Doct.  
of the gentleman you represent it will  
give me great pleasure to cooperate with  
him in a field which is doubtless wide  
enough for both - As regard Doct. Bigelow  
I think he can attend to but little apart  
from his proper duties - My earnest  
wish is that the expedition may be of  
eminent service to science & I trust I  
shall not sacrifice him to any selfish  
consideration - Aside from the real worth  
of the gentleman in question the fact that  
he is a friend of yours - should entitle  
him to my respect & regard -  
I am not for a subject which has given  
me a little annoyance - I shall  
be glad to receive from you any sug-  
gestions in regard to operations there that  
may be useful - If there are any other  
points in well known species which the  
importance of obtaining fresh specimens will make

to be better investigated than they can  
be in the dry - please direct my  
attention to them - We have a most  
capitulated draughtsman whose services I  
can command & I hope for a series  
of plates which shall not be inferior to  
anything yet published - It will  
truly give me great pleasure to hear  
from you - With assurances of esteem &

Remain yours truly

George Thurber

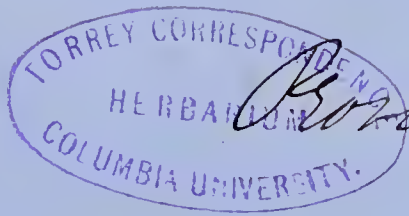
Secretary of Boundary Commission  
Pass del Norte - Texas







And. W. S. S.



My dear Sir

I have picked out the *Eriogonums* from the portion of my collections that I have rec'd. & hope there may be something new among them. I have sent them all & would thank you to name them according to their numbers - If they are of any use to you you can keep them. as I have duplicates of all but one - marked I think "E. inflation?" If this should prove to be that species I should like to have you save it for me as you already have it - I find I have but two specimens of *Megarrhiza* Cal. - of which I send you one - I am confident about the fruit opening when fully ripe as I had difficulty in finding ripe seed - the squirrels carrying them off as fast as they drop out - I sent an allied individual 951 - which may be of interest - also no 1002 a fragment of the only specimen met - I take the *Louysiana* to be *F. spinosa* H. B. K. from the description in Wislitz Rept - it is a rather meagre specimen but it was just commencing to flower & exceedingly difficult to find fl & leaves on the same branch - I carried the "red flag" into the fernery & green house of a



neighbors & procured some ferns for Herbert's  
ward's case. The masses of roots without fronds  
are *Adiantum pedatum* which with *Syzygium* &  
*Acrostichum* will look quite pretty - the polypods  
being put in for sake of company - In the  
same box with the ferns is a small package  
of the minerals promised -

Upon consultation with my friend I have  
concluded to apply for the position in the Assay  
Office. more with a hope that it may lead to  
something more remunerative than for its immediate  
pecuniary advantages - as a reference I enclose  
a note from Hon Philip Allen. the head of the Demo-  
cratic party here. U.S. Senator & an wealthy man-  
ufacturer - Should any others be needed I can fur-  
nish them if you will indicate the character re-  
quired. I do not hold any estimation with regard  
to experience in chemical matters as you did not  
seem to think them necessary but I am at liberty  
to refer to Dr J. P. Shepard our principal chemist here -

If the salary is not fixed by law but is arbitrary  
with the Secy of Treas. I could probably have it al-  
tered through the influence of Mr Allen -

I should like to know as early as practicable if  
the situation can be obtained as I shall not take  
any measures to procure employment until I hear  
from it - Should I be needed to assist you

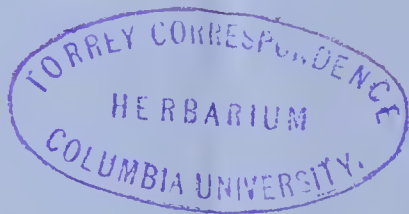
before the completion of the building I could go  
on at short notice -

Hoping to hear from you soon I

Remain Very Truly

George Thurber

Dr. J. Torrey }  
New York. }





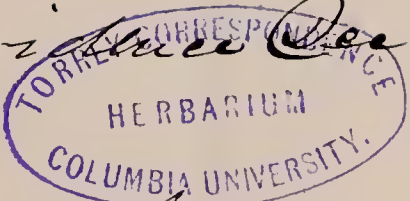


Ans. 2. verbally  
at Boston

Jan. Dec. 27

Providence Dec 22 1853.

My dear Sir



Your favor of the 20<sup>th</sup> is at hand - Unless something happens to prevent I will fill the place in the assay office. Though I regret that the time for commencing is so long postponed.

You ask me if I have no report to make or other work to do for the Commission -

It was decided that the concern expired on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January last & as I have received no reappointment I see no way of being remunerated for labor - I have done about a months work for govt since I returned for which I shall not get a cent & shall consider myself very lucky if I receive what back pay is

due me - I agreed with  
Mr Bartlett to furnish the  
commission with one suite  
of any collections I might  
make. And feel at liberty  
to do what I please with  
the remainder - it has always  
been my intention to give your-  
self & Dr Gray what you wished  
& distribute the rest where they  
would be best appreciated -

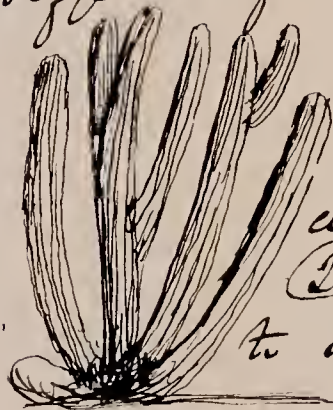
That portion of my collections  
made in Sonora came to hand  
entire & I also shipped suites  
of a majority of the rest by  
a conveyance by which they ar-  
rived safely. But the bulk of  
duplicates are still missing -

I rec'd notice a few days  
ago that the vessel into which  
they were transhipped was ex-  
pected daily but I have no  
positive information that my  
packages were among the  
things landed.

Of such plants as I have to  
I suppose you can have duplicates  
at once & of the others when they

arrive - I suppose Dr Gray  
has told you that several new  
genera have turned up among  
those I sent him -

I sent Dr Engelmann the  
materials of *Cereus giganteus* &  
he has prepared an article for  
Silliman's journal. describing  
also a new *Cereus* as *C. Thurberi*.  
it grows in town with *C. gig* -  
about 10 or 15 ft high but very  
different from the latter -



This is something new  
shape of the thing.

Could you give away  
any of the seeds of *C. gig*?

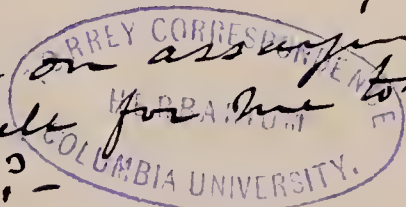
Dr Gray has sent some  
to Sir Hooker & I should  
be glad to distribute

the remainder before they get  
too old - I will try to run  
down to Cambridge while you  
are there -

Is there any work on ascertaining  
that it would be well for me to  
be familiar with? -

Very truly & gratefully yours

or John Torrey } George Thurber  
New York }

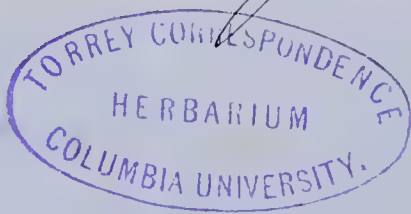






Ans. Feb. 3rd

Providence January 30<sup>th</sup> 1854



My Dear Doctor

After many delays I have at length obtained possession of my delinquent packages - There seems to have been a conspiracy of the fates against me - for the steamer which brought them from New York broke down, of course, & was two days behind her time - never ship merchandise in the same bottom with anything of mine if you wish to get it in a hurry - You may imagine the interest with which I opened the parcels to learn their state & the pleasure with which I discovered that the specimens were not much injured - With some few exceptions they scarcely suffered from dampness but the principal injury is from rubbing, though considering that they have been shaking about for some eight months this is not as great

as might be anticipated -

Doct. Gray writes me that the angular shape which yourself & he set down as a Supernumerated Sedum turns out to be a new relative of your favorite Eriogonums - After you left Cambridge we found that it was not a Sedum.

Dr G. says that he sent it to you to forward to Mr Bentham & throws himself upon my generosity for more - I have enough to supply you both & I enclose a small one & will sure you a letter to forward by stage - What is his name? or is that left to Bentham. This plant comes from a region which I regret I had so short a time at - San Felipe - it is just where the proper Californian vegetation - that of the Coast - ends & we enter upon the borders of the desert - within a short distance of each other I found the Zizyphus (Xylocarpus?) Simmondsia - a new Oxydium, the Rutosma. or Thamnesma / This rose by any other name would smell as sweet. ) & some other things - Near here, coming Eastward, we fall in with Algarobia, Prosopis & the everlasting Sarcocolla - Apropos de Larrea - May -



Emory is mistaken in saying that it can "hardly  
be made to burn". ~~At~~ El Paso it is the most  
common "oven wood" The Mexicans use it for  
heating their large clay ovens & it used to be  
a common saying with us that we could always  
tell Saturday by the smell -

It is, as you may suppose, quite a job to  
unite the different divisions of my collection  
& get the materials in order - I have gone  
through with the Polypets & Compositae but be-  
yond there is a "terra desconocida" which I  
am timid about entering -

How shall I know what to send you? ...  
of course you have a large majority of the  
plants from other sources -  
What do you make of the *Spraguea* thing  
sent by mistake among the *Eriops*? - I find I  
have four specimens of it left. but they all  
look very young -

I have beautiful specimens of *Calea spinosa* -  
and of the *Rocherlinia* looking bush I find good  
fruit -

How do you progress in chimney building &  
other assay office matters? - I think that  
I stated before that after I had taken out a  
set of plants for the Govt & one for myself. ~~Now~~

were at liberty to forage upon them -  
With sincere regard

Truly yours  
Gorge Thurber



What is this?

Stenotaphrum

from the Philippine Is.

My Dear Sir.

Providence June 6<sup>th</sup> 1857-



The illness and decease of a dear mother have so engrossed my mind for some time that I have hardly given a thought to anything else. My attention has been called to a list of appointments in the assay office that has been published, but as it contains but one assistant in the Assayer's department I infer that the place I am looking for has not yet been filled.

My desire to remain near home is now stronger than ever and I hope that the new Superintendent or whoever it rests with may be disposed to give me the situation.

Should any question respecting character & antecedents arise I can bring



satisfactory Testimonials, meanwhile  
I Enclose to you a letter which was  
sent me by Prof. Bailey when I was  
about leaving in the Boundary Comm.  
I value it especially as it came  
unlooked for and unsolicited.

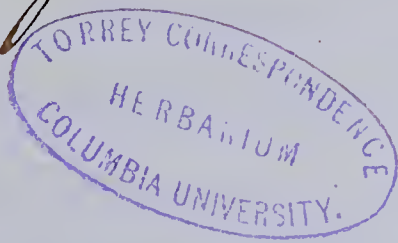
I hope you will not consider that  
I am pushing this matter beyond  
propriety. I should have waited  
patiently until I heard from you  
had I not been requested to make  
an engagement which would oc-  
cupy me a week, beginning the 20<sup>th</sup>.  
Of course I do not wish to promise  
my services without first ascertaining  
if there is any probability of my  
being called off before or about  
that time -

Mr Olney has recently returned from  
the South & is at present presiding  
over the Blue Pot - For the sud

reasons above given I have botanized  
none myself.

Very truly yours

George Hurta



Dr John Torrey  
New York





TORREY CORRESPONDENCE  
HERBARIUM  
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Providence June 24<sup>th</sup> 1854

My dear Sir

Your kind favor of  
21<sup>st</sup> was duly received -

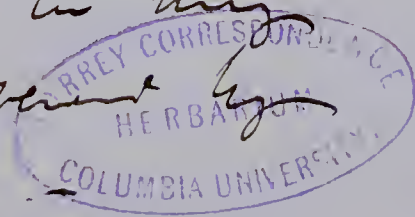
I regret that you should meet with  
any opposition in carrying out your  
wishes respecting the appointment of  
your assistants - You were kind enough  
to offer me the place in the assay  
office and I very much wish to  
get it, but, I wish you distinctly to  
understand that if it will embarrass  
you to appoint me or if it will  
~~stand~~ at all interfere with your  
relations with the higher powers. that  
you will not press any case to your  
own injury - Of this you can of course  
judge for your self & whatever may  
be the result I shall ever feel ob-  
liged to you for the disposition you  
have shown to aid me -

It is not easy - as you suggest -  
to find many here who are in  
favor with the administration. The  
most prominent Democrats, such  
as Dr Wayland & others have taken  
ground in open opposition to the Re-  
vueska bill & their good word might  
in the present instance prove an  
injury - I will send early in the  
coming week testimonial from  
the few whose influence would  
avail anything - but unfortunately  
there are but few outside of the  
Post office & Custom House who are  
not offensive in the eyes of the  
present powers -

I rec'd a letter from  
Dr Gray yesterday - he wishes to pub-  
lish the new genera & species in my  
collections - I shall be governed by  
the advice of yourself & him -

Very truly yours

George Thurber

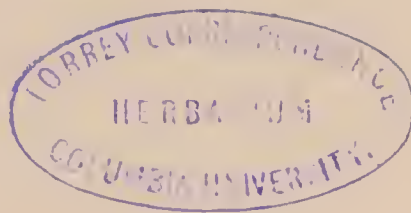




undated

[1854?]

Doct. Torrey



Dear Sir -

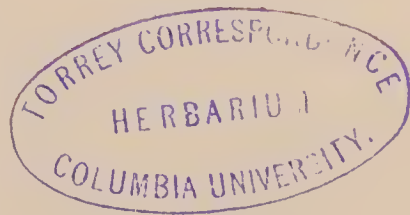
You will perceive  
by the enclosed prospectus that  
our Society gives a course of  
lectures this winter - We have  
nearly completed our arrangements  
looking but two lectures - Thinking  
you may be able to assist in  
supplying this deficiency I take  
the liberty to enquire if you know  
of any popular & entertaining lecturer  
who we could engage to give two  
brilliant lectures upon some ~~abstract~~  
chemical subject capable of  
striking illustration - This being our



first experiment with a course  
of this kind it is desirable to  
season it a little in the manner  
referred to - If you can put us in the  
way of engaging some such person  
to come sometime in January - perhaps -  
you will greatly oblige

Very truly yours

George Thurber



Philadelphia  
July 20<sup>th</sup> 1858

Dear Doct. Joice.

I must tell  
you what a capital time  
I have had since I have  
been let out to graze.  
Durand has been over all his  
grapes with me & he has  
- to use his phrase - perused  
a portion of the Herbarium of  
the Academy. He gives me  
desirable things where they  
are divisible & when not  
he loans me the specimens  
bodily, whether his own or  
the Academy's. All my  
greetings about Nuttall's Gambel

Things were correct - & he will  
have but one of his several  
new genera left - I fear  
your *Vilfa utilis* will be  
inutilis - (recollect I am in  
Phila.) for Nutt. is ahead of  
you - He, (Nutt.) is a great  
fellow to double on himself  
& I frequently find the same  
thing marked as two or three  
different species with an \*.  
I begin to think that we  
know quite as much about  
grasses as anybody. This  
evening went to the Academy  
& met a number of the  
working members thereof.  
Le Conte Jr. visited to be  
reminded to you, he goes  
tomorrow to Cambridge and  
will call & see you as he  
returns. Somebody here is  
reproducing Michxanth's *Sylva*

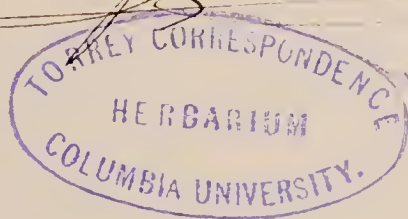


with an extra volume  
by one Smith.

Tomorrow I go to see Dr.  
Gurlington & as I have  
not finished at the Acad-  
emy, will not be able to  
return before Friday

Very sincerely

George Thurber

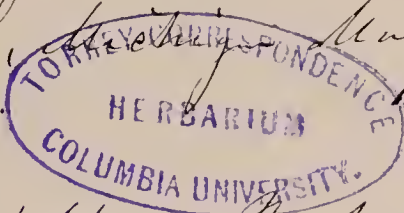


Prof John Tracy D.D.  
New York

Recd May 17.

State Agricultural College  
Lansing, Michigan May 12, 1860.

My dear Doctor Torrey



I suppose that you think I have been rather remiss about writing you. My silence has not been because I have not thought of it, but because I saw that things were approaching a crisis here & I hoped soon to be able to write you a more favorable account of my situation than I could at any former time or can even now. My position here has its pleasant and its reverse side. Its unpleasant side has been & is now the great uncertainty about money matters.

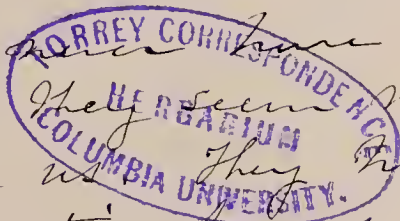
The State Treasury is absolutely bankrupt. The present administration in order to stand well with the people acted upon the very unsafe principle of large appropriations and small taxes. The result, which might have been foretold, is, that there is no money. As the means for carrying on the College come from specified sources & those taxes not coming all due till the next spring we have no money. The Treasury refuses to advance from



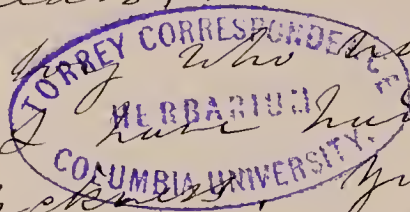
other funds & we have not a  
dollar for any purpose whatever.  
I managed to get part of the freight  
of my things paid out of the treasury,  
as was agreed upon before hand, but  
not a cent of salary & have been  
obliged to borrow for the current ex-  
penses - You may imagine that this  
state of things is not calculated to  
make one very joyous. A meeting  
of the state officers will be called to  
see if they will authorize a loan  
& if they will not the thing must  
"rust up" & stop. The state administra-  
tion is in the hands of the Republicans  
who being anxious for a re-nomination  
will be very timid about incurring  
a debt - & it will be a question as to  
which will most favor their political  
interests in the coming state convention.  
We are all in doubt & await the  
result with interest. So much for  
the dark side of the picture, as to  
the other - I can say that my asso-  
ciates in the faculty are all that  
I could desire, gentlemanly & genial.  
We work together most harmoniously  
& I see no chance for any conflict  
of interest (until perhaps they put a  
president over us -). All the former

faculties have been quite the reverse of this, split up by quarrels to the degree that it was seldom that all hands were even on speaking terms.

With regard to the boys, they are about 50 - and as unpromising a set, if one were to judge from their looks, as could be congregated anywhere. They are above the average women in the class room and in my departments I am much pleased with them. The ~~men~~ <sup>boys</sup> have any trouble with the boys & they seem much attached to all of us. They have under former administrations been worried & scolded & treated like children - some of the former profs being ex-schoolmasters - but now, being treated as if they were gentlemen, they behave as such. One can in a little while find how he stands in the estimation of his classes & I think I can say (without being open to the charge of self-glorification) that the good opinion I have & regard of them is reciprocated. I have 2 classes in botany, one of 8 in systematic botany and one of 14 in the rudiments. I think that I have quite a number of the botanists of the future on the stocks - some real enthusiasts. More than half the number are actually



in love with the subject - and this  
you must allow is a large propor-  
tion for a study that is required  
of them. I find that Goudy gave  
them nothing in the world but detached  
bits of microscopy, both in plants & ani-  
mals - having no reference to any  
thing - more optical exhibitions. One  
of the boys told me the other day that  
they used to "Cyfangle" (Pishigan for  
numbering) Goudy with all sorts of ex-  
cuses to get out of class, but that  
now there wasn't a boy who would  
stay away. Indeed I have had no  
absences but from sickness. You  
must not think that I am taking  
on airs - I have supposed you  
would be interested in my success  
and I don't know what else I could  
do but say that I am succeeding.  
I volunteered to take mineralogy, wishing  
to renew an old acquaintance. I  
have a class in that twice a week,  
and besides this, in order to avoid the  
expense of another prof. I have in  
common with the others taken a study  
out of my department. I have the  
Elements of Natural Philosophy - as  
there is a very good set of apparatus  
I rather like it, but it takes too  
much time. Indeed I never worked





Under Man I have done here.  
I have had hardly time to read the  
papers & keep the run of your hu-  
morous Democracy. As for botany  
work - I haven't done a lick. I  
must begin now. I shall  
not after this week ~~be~~ <sup>be</sup> much  
out of door work to look after. The  
grounds around the college have  
been laid out for my gratification  
& I have had to oversee a good  
part of it. The boys are rather  
surprised to see a New Yorker not  
afraid to put his hands into the  
earth. The students are required  
to work three hours daily. I think  
if you could see how well it oper-  
ates here your ~~past~~ objections to man-  
ual labor colleges would be removed.  
They take as much interest in the  
work as they do in their studies.  
They do whatever is required of them  
cheerfully & well. I had the best boy-  
leader, Carting manure for me today.  
As I am "doctored" here I have to doctor  
in return. My practice is of the safest  
kind. One boy came yesterday with his  
troubles - Prescription - Tigs 1<sup>st</sup> to be  
taken pro re nata - Another who had  
been soaking the life out of him with  
wet sheets was prescribed dry & a tonic.

As my prescriptions have been thus far attended with benefit I get what falls to most practitioners in the early days of their career - lots of gratitude. Here it is not for the uncertain conditions of things entirely without our control I should be quite contented. As it is I hope all will result favorably. I hope you will not speak of what I have written of the troubles except to my particular friends. You may imagine from the amount of work I have on hand that I have not been able to collect very largely. Indeed until just now there has not been much that was very desirable. I took a tramp today & found several things that I never saw growing before. *Hydrastis*, *Viola Canadensis* & *rostrata* - *Achillea* *pubescens*. *Smilacina trifolia* - *Oxycodon* *Canadensis*. *Phlox* - probably *divaricata* - &c. I forgot in speaking of the unpleasant features to state that the boys here, with I believe one single exception, are Republicans of the blackest kind. They have a Tribune Club & that mischievous sheet is sapping the youthful mind with its disunion doctrines - You would have been amused

at the interest taken in the doings of  
the Charleston convention. One of  
the mornings when this was in session  
I was out in the fields; the smallest  
boy in the college came across to  
intercept me to ask if there was a  
nomination. He couldn't wait two hours  
for the news. It wouldn't be safe for  
any of the Charleston Chicago delegates  
to visit here if Seward isn't nominated.

I believe that I have given you  
as much of my delightful chiro-  
graphy as you can decipher in a  
week - If you have a failing it  
is inability to read good handwriting! -  
Remember me with best regards to  
all the faithful at the University, &  
your family, not forgetting the  
quadrumanous portion thereof

As ever very truly

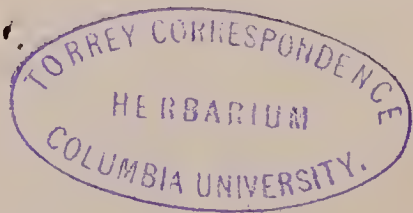
George Thurber

P.S. I rec'd a lot of the Proceedings of Cal. Nat.  
Series - I send you one - Tell Miss Eliza  
that my transition state prevented me  
from replying to her note - I cannot  
give any countenance to Miss Shaw until  
next fall - Schults shall be attended to  
in due time.

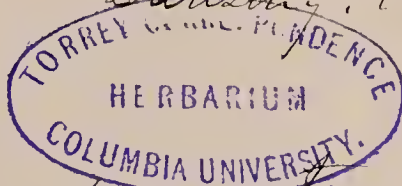
Over -



If I don't seal this letter pretty  
soon I shall be late for Chapel  
in the morning - I would add that  
I must put you up to the Dodge  
about the Liquid Blue that is so  
extremely advertised - Soak glass until  
soft - melt in its "water of absorption"  
& add  $\frac{1}{5}$  of volume of strong acetic  
acid - If you haven't tried it you  
will find it the best of all the  
Genus Stickumtight.



State Ayl. College  
Searsville, Mich. June 16/00.



Dear Doct. Torrey

A day or two after I wrote

you I rec'd your welcome letter.  
I hoped to be able to give you an  
account of the Ex. Sp. grasses soon  
after I came here - but the promised  
cases are not made & my herbarium  
is about useless. I have extemporized  
some shelves for the most needed  
things & have given every moment I  
could spare during the present week  
to them - Please send me the form in  
which the other material is drawn up  
& let me know how extended the synonymy  
is to be. Before the matter is printed I  
shall visit you to go over some of the  
species but will wait till you can do  
a number at a job. If you knew  
the disadvantages under which I work  
you would not think me neglectful  
of your wishes - If I try to do anything  
in the evening it takes me half my time  
to kill mosquitoes - you cannot go a  
half mile in any direction without coming  
to an impenetrable swamp where the  
stagnant water breeds these vermin with  
most carnivorous propensities. They are  
everywhere like the frogs of Egypt - Today  
(Saturday) I thought I would have a whole  
day to myself but running after tick boys  
has very much broken it up. This is

a miserably unhealthy locality & though  
the "sickly season" has not begun it is often  
that I have 3 + 4 absent from a class  
of 8, on account of illness. I have packed  
two boys off home to recover. I loose about  
one day in the week myself & am half  
sick the rest of the time - Bilious troubles  
prevail & I don't like to think what a  
time we shall have here in August -  
I wrote you in my last the most en-  
couraging account that circumstances  
would admit of. I have no fault to  
find with the faculty & the students they  
are both quite as I could wish - but the  
powers above us treat us with absolute  
neglect. The Governor was here a few  
weeks ago & said that the members of  
the Administration would meet the 1<sup>st</sup>  
of this month in Detroit & see what could  
be done for us - They met & didn't "see" any-  
thing but to see who would get renominated.  
So we shall know nothing until late in  
July when they meet again - Then I  
have no confidence in the permanency  
of the institution - There is a strong  
influence at work against it from  
the University at Ann Arbor - If any  
money is to be given for such purposes  
they wish it - It is currently reported,  
with what truth I don't pretend to know  
enough of local matters to judge, that  
the Supt. of Public Instruction who lives  
at Ann Arbor is under this influence  
& wishes to break up the college.



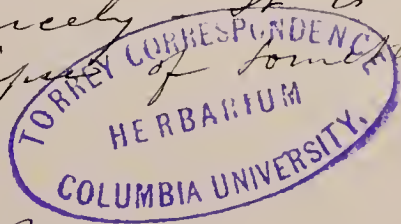
If we had not disregarded his instructions this spring we should not have had ten students. Under all these disagreeable circumstances you cannot wonder that I desire to get away from here as soon as possible. I soiled myself from civilization in the hope of a sure though moderate pay & thinking that I might find compensation in this & profit in a fair share of leisure. Neither of these hopes are realized. I have no time to myself for in the poverty of means & paucity of teachers we all go out of our departments & I don't think I ever worked so hard in my life. Teaching is pleasant but too much is drudgery. If you see any chance where ~~one~~ moderate living can be had within civilization or completely out of it I wish you would let me know.

Buchanan has written to me to ask why I don't apply for a situation in the new Botanic garden. I see that your friend Mr. Stuart is one of the names mentioned in connection with it & you probably can learn of their plans. I am willing to work or travel. I suppose however that an American will stand a poor chance beside a French or German botanist.

Have just received Chapman's book from Eray. It looks very nicely. It is very pleasant to get a glimpse of something from the East.

Ever truly yours

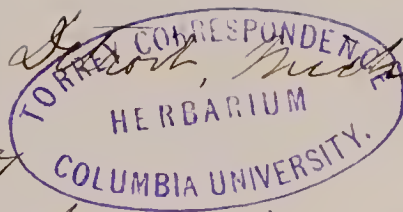
George Thurber



1870  
1871  
1872

1873  
1874  
1875

Recd. Aug 22  
and Aug 22-24



At West, Mich. Aug 18, 1860.

Dear Doctor Torrey

You will probably wonder how I happen to be here. We have a summer recess of a week at the college & wishing to rusticate a little during that time, I accepted the invitation of the father of one of our sick boys to make him a visit at his residence, which is about half the distance, staid there several days and then came on to do up various errands for myself & neighbors. At last that efficient body known as the State Board of Education has had a drop to keep us from absolute want. - Eight hundred dollars to divide among those whose demands are over three thousand! - Just enough to pay board bills & a few dollars over with no satisfaction for the future. The whole thing is ~~so~~ contemptible



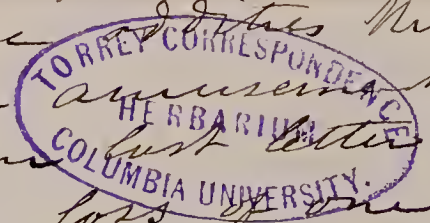
inefficient that I have no patience  
in thinking of it. For some time  
I have had warnings of Fever & ague  
& while on the visit, just mentioned,  
the thing itself came. As Tomtit says  
(supposing you to have read Dred) "I've got a  
'sperience on dat ar" - Just imagine  
every individual bone in your body cut into  
such pieces, with a current of pain, each  
thicker than the other, running through  
in different directions with a little con-  
centration wherever the connection is broken  
- & you have a fair notion of the  
ague. Then you have the fever & the  
two are like the Irishman's two roads,  
"when you have travelled half way on  
either you will wish you had taken  
the other". The whole leaves you feeling  
like a wrung out dish cloth with a  
bushel basket for a head. Excuse  
technicalities, if I am not writing  
to an M.D. I would try to popularize

The description. As soon as I was able  
to move I came here & consulted Doct.  
Pitcher. And fed on quinia. I have  
taken enough to make me bark before  
long, if I don't bite. The ague season  
has just begun & Doct. P. says that from  
the indications there will probably be  
a large crop - a prospect which I,  
with my tendency to ~~many~~ troubles, do  
not relish. I have ~~been~~ in an ounce  
of quinia & a ~~corresponding~~ amount  
of the coculean mass, in view of  
a state of siege. Doct. Pitcher has  
been exceedingly kind to me - He says  
that I ought to be at Ann Arbor & that  
he will see if there is any chance for  
a botanist - I wish you could nudge  
him on that point. I feel that I  
cannot stay permanently at Lansing,  
surely not if this attack is often  
repeated - The other place is old &  
healthy & they have a large endowment.

They have a Prof. there who does  
the Mineralogy, geology, zoology  
& botany - is the state geologist &  
is making a state survey & wants  
the chemistry besides! - Doct.  
P. says he doesn't know anything  
about either of these little subjects.  
I should, I think, like much to have  
the Botany & Mat Medica there.  
Even the slightest glimpse through  
the woods gives me hope that I  
shall get out of them somehow.

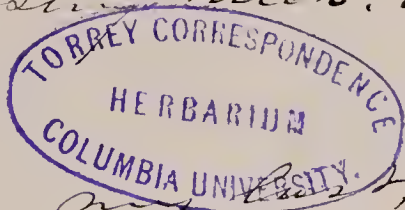
I passed a pleasant evening with  
Capt. Whipple & Doct. Bigelow, the  
latter is here as a meteorological  
observer for the Lake Survey. Both  
wished to be remembered to you. It  
is the first time that I have seen  
Bigelow since the Boundary days,  
he seems to be in very good spirits  
& has worn off all those <sup>additions</sup> that  
afforded us so much amusement.  
I had a laugh over your last letter,  
complaining of the loss of one  
that I had already safely in my  
possession. As soon as I get to the  
college & am well enough, will  
send some grass notes.

Ever very truly George Thurber





Agricult. College  
Lansing Mich. Aug 27 '60



Dear Doctor Torrey

In my last, from  
Detroit I told you that I was  
quite ill with ague. Since I returned  
I have been quite well till today -  
tomorrow is the dreaded 14<sup>th</sup> day  
after the first attack & every "bone"  
in my body is informing me of it.  
I hope I may stave it off for I  
have quite satisfied my curiosity  
in the ague line. As soon as the  
sun is fairly down a dense white  
fog comes creeping over the ground,  
the strangest fog - extending only 15 or  
20 feet upwards but so thick that  
you cannot see across the road.  
When this is about you can smell  
all the vegetation that ever was  
smelled. Go out in it & your hair  
is dripping & clothes quite moist.  
In the morning every thing is reeking  
with moisture & one cannot go  
about with comfort till the middle  
of the forenoon when it is oppressively  
hot. This has been repeated every day,  
except when it rained, for nearly  
two months. I send you a list  
of a part of the Sp. Exped. Grasses.  
I have worked at others but

This is as far as the list is con-  
tinuous. I wish I had your  
herbarium near by for a few  
days to settle some things. I would  
like you to go over there & see if  
you have any better disposition  
to make of any of them. In  
this new memorandum I of course  
did not put Synonyms - these I  
will include when I write out the  
notes finally - Many of the speci-  
mens are unnumbered, in these  
cases I have quoted the labels,  
the originals of which you have.  
Our horrid boys are all agog because  
they expect to hear the naughty Mr  
Seward next week. This irrepressible  
man & the reprehensible Cassius  
Mr. Blays together with the audacious  
Sovereign are to be at Lansing & it  
is expected that 50 thousand of  
the benighted people will counter-  
ance the doings of these agitators  
& disorganizers - I am afraid that  
with these influences so near  
me I shall fall away from  
the true Democratic faith -

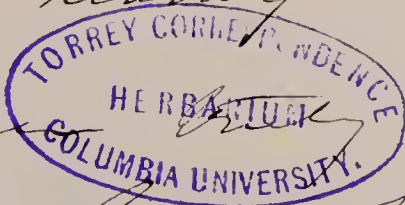
I am getting very uneasy here. I  
hear so much that is discour-

aying about the future prospects  
of the concern. The people attached  
to it think that it must go on,  
but outsiders think that the  
legislature will not appropriate.

The Democratic papers run it  
down - the past management gives  
them plenty of capital & the chief  
trouble about their charges is that  
they are true - on the other hand  
the Republican papers say but  
little in its favor - It is a one  
horse concern any way. You  
may think it queer that I men-  
tion politics, as associated with a  
college, but politics pervade every-  
thing here - it breaks up families  
& people don't visit their neighbors  
if they go to "tother church".

It may be that the above hints  
make me a little snarly - so I'll  
stop - I only heartily wish I was  
out of it.

As ever



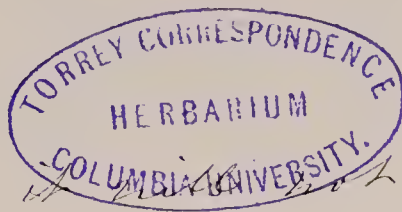
George Thurber



26

Rec? Sept. 14

Col. College Sansing,  
Miss. Sept. 10. 1866.



Dear Doct. Torrey

If it ~~is~~ not too troubling you too much about my affairs I would like to consult with you about a matter which has recently turned up. There has been a reorganization of the 13<sup>th</sup> St. Med. College & I can probably have the Botany & Nat. Med if I wish it. The College of Pharmacy wish me to come back there & if the two classes together would make ~~the~~ pay anything respectable I might be disposed to try it. The College of Pharmacy gave me \$200. last year & probably would do the same this season. Of course I should do as Doremus does & have both classes in one. What I wish of you is, in the first place to tell me if you think the course advisable - whether being connected with an institution that has had so many changes & has not perhaps held the highest rank would be to my advantage. Then I would like you to ascertain from Doremus what would be the probable income & outgo in that department.

Doct. Meredith Reese told Meakin  
that I could have it if I wished.  
Dr. Reese, has recently associated him-  
self with the College. I do not know  
what his standing is in the profession.  
It may be well if you have every  
conversation upon the subject to have  
it distinctly understood that I take  
only Materia Medica & Pharmacy with  
Botany as an adjunct. Treating the  
substances as objects of natural history  
& in short giving just that which  
medical students need & nobody gives.  
Therapeutics I have nothing to  
do with. It has been my hope  
to be able to live quietly in New  
York during the coming winter &  
finish up the Catalogue upon which  
I have expended so much time  
& work. But I do not see that  
our money affairs ~~will~~ here will  
materially improve this year & this  
winter will probably decide the fate  
of this institution with the legislature,  
it will either be abandoned or put on  
a respectable footing. I regret much  
to be obliged to defer my catalogue  
but I do not see how I can get

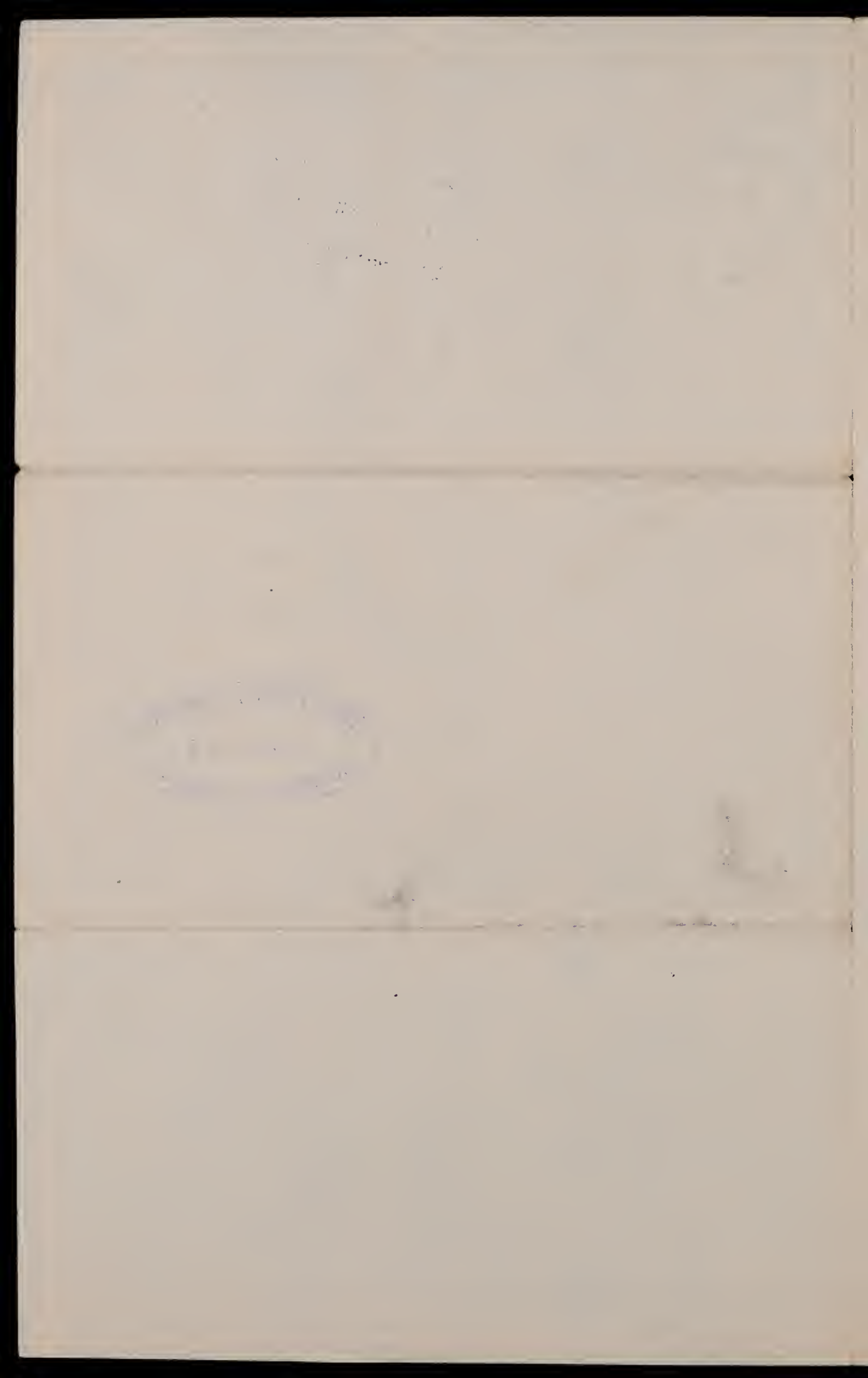


along this winter without doing  
something remunerative. I was  
obliged to hire money to enable me  
to remove here, which would have  
been paid had I been paid.

Then I had to give Peter Cooper a  
note for \$100- for rent. These things  
must be paid if I can find any  
way to do it. If you will see  
Doremus or Reese at an early  
day & learn what are the pros-  
pects there I shall be very glad.

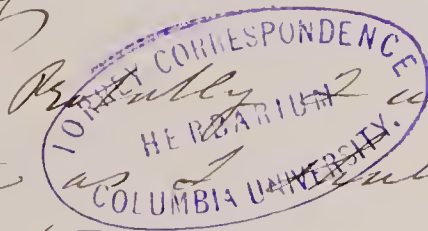
Very truly  
George Thurber





State Ayl College  
Lansing Mich May 7/61

Dear Doct. Torrey



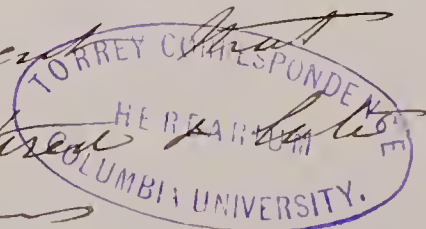
Practically I am as  
much settled as I shall be.  
Have 60 students & more are com-  
ing. Shall not know how we  
will fare for money until the  
Board meets, which will be in  
3 weeks. The Horticultural Dept.  
is placed under me & that with  
one class daily gives me just as  
much as I can attend to. I  
have one of the seniors for an  
assistant who serves me a great  
deal. Am making extensive ex-  
periments in germination of peas  
beans & others of your favorites.  
On Saturday I was sitting in a cellar  
on a pork barrel seriously dis-  
cussing with my self, which & how many  
potatoes should be planted that  
day. The thought came across  
me that if you were to look in  
upon us & see the scene you  
would be highly amused & I broke  
out into a hearty laugh, must



to the other's dismay - Horrible  
weather cold winds & killing  
frosts - Have a letter from  
Mr. Megard concerning the Asst.  
Assayship of San Francisco -  
I have asked him some ques-  
tions about it. It strikes me about  
half favorably - I would like to  
know if he is as peculiar as he  
was when he held the place before.  
The most that I know of him is  
from a strange address that he  
published - When he was there  
before I believe they worked in  
the assay Dept. till late in the  
evening - If this is the case I should  
not go - I don't care to give up  
working so for more pay.

Write me what you think of the  
matter - Tell Herb. that the  
trees are here & planted - Ask  
him if he has the bill. as I don't  
think that all were sent & that  
were ordered - Very truly  
as ever yours

George Thurber



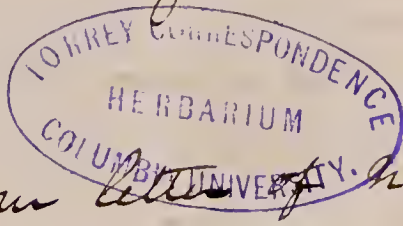


Geo. Thurber  
May 9/61



Agricultural College  
Lansing, Mich. Oct. 5<sup>th</sup> 1861.

Dear Doct. Torrey



Your letter of nearly two

months ago has been lying on my  
table waiting for me to feel like an-  
swering - or what is more to the point  
to find time to write. I have determined  
that it shall not go over another week  
& though I don't feel much like  
writing I will follow the advice of Mrs.  
Chick & "make an effort". Saturday is al-  
ways a busy day with me - having boys  
at work in some six different places it  
takes all attention & no little travel to  
keep all strings pulling at once. We  
fared in frost and have been securing  
some tons of hay. I unfortunately  
nearly disabled my right hand by a  
burn & have not been able to use  
it freely for some weeks. It is now so  
that I can write slowly without pain  
which is a great comfort. To begin  
at the beginning - I believe that I  
told you that I should have the de-  
partment of Horticulture on my hands.  
This involves the working of some 30 acres

of garden. requiring not only constant personal super-vision but much study & thought. Rather a new position for me to be placed in - but despite the long-drawings the garden has been a success - I work about 20 boys, have their work to lay out & their time to keep accounts of & all sorts of loose ends to gather up. As if this were not enough for one person, ~~and~~ the change in the course throws botany out for this year & I have two classes in subjects which I care but little about. Natural Philosophy & Mineralogy. Each of these requires study & preparation of illustrations - I take them up at night & often fall asleep with my book in my hand. Things monetary went along smoothly in the early part of the season. but now, that so much is required for the war, all in that quarter is uncertainty. We are told that we must wait. Before I ascertained this state of things I was appointed to by the College of Pharmacy to lecture this winter. I told them that I would give them two & a half months out of my three months vacation. They concluded to engage some one who would give them the full course of four months. So I am thrown

out of that source of revenue & of  
course feel a little anxious to know  
how money matters will result here.  
I had quite made up my mind to  
try & be contented here. There are so  
many things which attach me to the  
place. I have such good friends in the  
faculty - get along so smoothly with the  
students & so much work of my own  
hands has been depended here that I  
should hate to give it up. But then the  
monies! - We shall see how it will all  
come out. If they pay I shall be able  
to pass my vacation in New York where I  
can live in a small way & do up my  
enumeration of the grasses. I find that  
I must do this before I finish the cathe-  
logue. Here it is just impossible to do any  
botanical work. From seven in the morn-  
ing until late at night I am thoroughly  
occupied. We have had quite a sick-  
ly season & Dr. Mearns & myself have  
had to give a great deal of time to  
the hospital department. We usually  
make our visits together & I keep a  
private apothecaries' shop & dispense  
at my own expense. I have had to  
stop while writing to answer two calls  
for medicine. We neither of us make  
any charge as that would give the  
people claims upon our services. We  
have had abundant dysenteries &



one typhoid fever - Ague is so common  
that we do not count it - The let alone  
treatment is splendid in most everything  
but ague - nothing short of Quinine will  
stop that - We get daily our news through  
the Detroit papers - I just skim them &  
wait until I get a two days old I.D.  
before I make up my mind - Michigan  
is doing far more in proportion to her  
population than New York. Our little  
community has given up nine of its best  
boys to go under Fremont - I lost some  
of my best friends thus - I get the  
kindest & most touching letters from them -  
In addition to other things I drill the  
students twice a week - revising my  
old military knowledge which had long  
ago been laid by as useless - I am glad  
that Herb. has a place in the assay office -  
I infer from your letter that Mr. Drumm  
is superintendent of the Assay office - If  
so I am surprised that he did not make  
me an offer of a place - I should  
not have accepted it, but after all  
the trouble I have had with the thing  
it would have been rather gratifying -  
When one acts from principle he  
must get his own reward in so  
doing as he need expect little beyond  
that - I have recently taken out &

put up a fine portrait of Fremont  
which I have had for a long time  
in my drawers. I don't know yet  
whether to put it back or not. I  
can't help believing that he will come  
out all right yet. Engelmann about  
two months ago wrote me a most gloomy  
account of affairs in St Louis - He seemed  
to think that the military politicians  
were quite as bad as the secessionists.  
He says like yourself that study is all  
out of the question. Besides cultivating  
"garden sass" to a large extent I have  
done a good deal in floriculture.  
Once in a while some one comes along  
who appreciates such things. I was  
quite delighted - before I knew who  
they were - by a visit from Gov. & Mrs.  
Seymour of New York. Both of whom  
seemed to know a deal about flowers  
& botany. I regretted that I did not  
know who they were until they had  
gone - Such people take me back  
into the world once more. The plants  
I put out this spring did very poorly  
on account of the severe dry weather  
which followed the planting. A  
little *Forreya* which I beg gave me  
survived - like its namesake it likes  
hot weather. I hope I shall make

it live through the winter -  
You find so much satisfaction in  
making fun of my writing that I  
console myself for the difficulty of  
writing with a cooked finger in thinking  
of the great fund of amusement I  
am providing you with - With re-  
membrances to all your household  
I am most truly

George Thurber





[1869?]

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186

Dear Doctor Torrey.



Yours enclosing Grass  
 came duly - but I was unable  
 to look at it until this evening.  
 It is Bouteloua aristoides Thurb.  
 Scribra ——— H.B.K.  
 Eutrachia ——— Kth -

a very small and underdeveloped  
 specimen - It is also Wright's  
 751, Col., 1848 - & 2017 & 2019 Col.  
 1851 - You probably have it under  
 one of these numbers - if not I  
 can give you specimens collected  
 by Hayes - I had heard of the  
 Death of Martins -

Very sincerely Yours

George Thurber

"Oxy Graminis"

Vide Torr. Mus.

